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one pilaster cantoned upon two others, and these pilasters all have pedestals which follow the breaks and projections, and caps which do likewise.

The carving on the pilasters, while it recalls that on a Hadley chest, is not the same, though apparently of the same family. It is excellently placed. The pedestal face has a treatment, rather out of scale and unfortunately now partly destroyed, which can or could be seen entire in the doorway of the Grant House, in East Windsor.

The leafage in the cap is a curious attempt to render the lower acanthus leaves of a Corinthian capital. The volutes are lacking, but are suggested, as is the central ornament, by the leafage above the lower row.

In the entablature the three members are present and in nearly correct proportion, though the cushion frieze is too small to be orthodox. The mouldings, too, keep the general appearance of the orders, but they are profiled with ancient curves and are quite sharp, as at the top of the architrave, while the cove in the surbase of the pedestal is almost undercut.

It is this curious effect of conservatism working on the new material demanded by fashion which gives the doorway its remarkably important historical character. We can see our old craftsman, a man imbued with a sound tradition in building and endowed with artistic ability of no mean order, struggling to fit old and new together in New England as his Jacobean forefathers had done in the older land. And as their work was charming, so was his; and we honor him for his result, which was the best doorway we know of the type so dear to the conservative valley.

NORMAN MORRISON ISHAM.

NEW ACQUISITIONS OF ITALIAN ART

THE Museum collections have been somewhat weak in specimens of Italian household furniture, and so occasion was taken at the disposal of the collection of Prof. Elia Volpi, which attracted considerable attention in the early part of the

winter, to acquire certain pieces of furniture, as well as of sculpture and majolica, which will be useful in the installation of domestic interiors of the Renaissance. These are exhibited in the Room of Recent Accessions for the month, and all who remember their skilful display in the Davanzati Palace in Florence will be interested to have them accessible to the general public for study purposes.

Of chief interest is the large cassone with beautiful relief design in gilded gesso and architecturally moulded base and cover.



FALDSTOOL, ITALIAN
DATED 1601

Cassoni or wedding chests were used by the bride for linen and household effects, and ordinarily were placed around the walls, to take the place of chairs or tables. The piece is not of this humble character. It is one of a pair—the other of which was bought at the sale by a private purchaser—that seem rather to have been made for one of the greater palaces, and for a more formal use. Aside from its unusual height and architectural character, the delicacy of the design sets it apart. The Museum owns only one of so elaborate a form, the great Strozzi chest with painted panel, exhibited in F 5; but up to this time, there has been no example of figure design in gesso of such ambitious character. At the corners are figures of sphinxes, and the

central panel is framed at the top and bottom by a raised decoration of rosettes. The subject portrayed is the poetic story of the search of Demeter for her daughter Persephone, a characteristic expression of the vogue for mythological subjects. At the left Demeter is setting out, torch in hand, in her dragon-drawn chariot, while Hecate, who alone of the gods besides Helios had witnessed the abduction of Persephone by Hades, with flaming torch assists in the search. In the

and all sides are finished alike, with panels outlined in intarsia and flanked by pilasters. The plinth and the upper frieze are also inlaid with vario-colored woods. The ecclesiastical faldstool, partly of iron and partly of brass, is said to have come from the Cathedral of Fabriano. It bears the inscription D(ominus) CELSUS AMERICUS TURCUS A SENIS: ROMANUS ABBAS 1601—D Celso Amerigo Turchi of Siena: Roman abbot 1601—as well as a curious coat of arms which it is impossible to decipher.



CASSONE, FLORENTINE
LAST QUARTER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

center are two fauns, with panpipes and horn of plenty, who flee, frightened by the unexpected apparition, while at the right a centaur and two fauns have not as yet received the alarm. The design has been attributed to Pollaiuolo, but while a distant relationship can be traced, it is Pollaiuolesque only in so far as his influence was marked on many of the Florentine craftsmen in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the period to which this piece dates.

The other pieces of furniture are a sixteenth-century Florentine walnut cabinet and an ecclesiastical faldstool. The former piece shows all the excellence of Tuscan workmanship. It is a piece designed to stand in the center of a room,

Such a faldstool was used in certain high ceremonials of the church when it was placed in the chancel for the prelate to sit upon while being robed for the sacred offices. Bode illustrates a similar piece formerly in the Bardini Collection.¹

The Madonna and Child of terracotta polychromed and gilded, is by the Master of the Pellegrini Chapel. This sculptor was an unknown artist, possibly a Florentine, who worked in Sant' Anastasia in Verona during the first half of the fifteenth century. To him Bode has attributed as well a group of sculptures which certainly bear the closest family resemblance. Of these the piece in the Museo Nazionale in

¹Die Italienischen Hausmöbel der Renaissance. Abb. 31.

Florence and more particularly one in the South Kensington Museum show great similarities to the Museum piece.¹ The latter especially has the curiously baroque mixture of Gothic and natural forms, the same clustered columns, the putti, the niche with fan vault, the gracefully looped



MADONNA AND CHILD
BY
THE MASTER OF THE PELLEGRINI CHAPEL

cloth of honor behind the figure of the Virgin, and the same peculiarly misproportioned hands. Particular elements of the drapery are almost identical. Venturi has called attention to the fact that these sculptures and others of their immediate type are nearer to the chapel sculptures in architectural details and general effect

¹See also Nos. 9, 10, and 11 in the Catalogue of Sculpture published by the Museum.

than in the absolute style of the figures. It is sufficient to say that the Museum Madonna is much closer to the art of Della Quercia than are the figures in the chapel, though both seem to have been caught up in the provincial stream of Emilian art which combined in itself Venetian elements drawn from the Dalle Masegne, Sienese elements from Jacopo della Quercia, and certain Florentine characteristics. Venturi says that the name Master of the Pellegrini Chapel represents in reality an entire group of popular sculptors in Tuscany and the Veneto who are not at all to be disregarded because of the simplicity of their imperfections. While we do not subscribe entirely to this, certainly more than one hand can be traced in this group of sculptures, but it is impossible in the present stage of research upon the subject to identify them more particularly.

Most unusual is the large relief of the Virgin and Child, more than life size, and not in terracotta or wood, as one might expect, but in a much less frequently used material—carton or papier maché. She sits in majesty, her ample robes hiding all but the symbolic lions' heads which flank the throne upon either side. Above her is a canopy ornately decorated with a mixture of Renaissance scrolls and cusped Gothic pendants. In her right hand she carries a bird and the Christ Child leans forward as if to grasp it. Her robe, drawn closely about her brow, falls back from her shoulders, revealing a richly patterned brocade, and then falls in elaborately arranged folds to her feet. It is a work of the early fifteenth century and reveals in every line the Sienese influence, the ideal represented so often in the sister art of painting. The artist has not followed in the footsteps of that great innovator Jacopo della Quercia, whose sculptures blazed the way and pointed toward the future Michelangelo. Rather with the inherent conservatism of many Sienese artists or those who came under their influence, he has taken the old conventions, the conventions which certain painters carried on till nearly the opening of the sixteenth century, and represented them with a charming effect of naïveté.

The five pieces of Italian majolica il-

lustrate varying phases of potting and design that preceded the fuller development of the late fifteenth century and sixteenth century. Of these, the plateau and the two jugs show primitive elements which characterize wares of the fourteenth and the early years of the fifteenth century. As in all primitive work, there is great similarity of style. All are more or less hasty in treatment, roughly potted, the decoration usually in the form of interlacing bands and hatched lines, while the colors employed are almost exclusively a manganese purple and a pale copper green. When other colors do appear, they are a soft blue and a yellow. Orvieto seems to have been the greatest center of production; for many examples whose provenance is certain come from there, as well as great numbers of shards found in the pozzi of the great palaces. The plateau shows all the characteristic features of Orvietan workmanship, its frankly provincial character, as well as the delicate color range and the rather crude design of the trecento workman. It is interesting to compare this fourteenth-century piece with the two squat jugs which came from Todi. They date about 1400 and were exhibited by Prof. Ceci, their owner, in the great exhibition of majolica in Perugia. From his hands they later passed into the collection of Prof. Volpi, and Bode has illustrated them in his work on Italian majolica.¹

A charming little picture, a miracle of Saint Nicholas, by Bicci di Lorenzo,² is now exhibited in the Room of Recent Accessions, where it has been held over for several months to be shown in connection with these pieces. In it are various examples of early pottery, quite in the type of the Mu-

seum pieces, well illustrating the homely uses to which pieces of this character were put.

Oriental influence was marked throughout the fourteenth century in different phases of Italian art. But in the fifteenth century, in majolica it became more notable than ever, through importation of the popular Hispano-Moresque ware from Valencia. The Italian potters set to work to copy the beautiful blue which they found in this and Near Eastern pottery, and the result appears in a group of wares classed by Wallis under the name of oak-leaf jars. The workmen never reached the desired goal, but making a merit of failure, they produced a distinctive type of their own. The two-handled albarello illustrates their work, and is as interesting in design as in the treatment of the thickly running blue color outlined by manganese. The piece bears the arms of the hospital of Santa Maria della Scala, of Siena, or the Florentine offshoot of the same name. A similar piece is in the South Kensington Museum,³ another was shown in the Palazzo Pubblico, in Siena.⁴ While the artist sometimes tried to copy only certain elements, such as the blue color, Florentine workmen at times made frank copies of the Hispano-Moresque, as the albarello decorated with the vine leaves shows. It is a direct transcription in design, but in place of the gold lustre, the secret of the Valencian artists, a manganese purple is used, and a yellow, rather unpleasant in quality. It is interesting to note in the great Portinari altarpiece, by Hugo van der Goes, painted in 1474-1477, that a piece similar in design, only of Valencian workmanship, is placed below the figure of the Virgin.

W. M. M.

¹Die Anfänge der Majolikakunst in Toskana, page 6.

²Illustrated in the November, 1916, number of the MUSEUM BULLETIN, page 237.

³Ill. Bode, *idem*, Plate VI, above left.

⁴La Mostra d'antica arte Senese. Pl. 95.